2 Ile not meddle with it, it is a dangerous thing,
It makes a man a coward. A man cannot steale,
But it accuseth him, he cannot steale but it checks him;
He cannot lye with his neighbours wife but it detects
Him, it is a blushing shamfast spirit that mutinies
In a mans bosome: it fils one full of obstacles,
It made me once restore a piece of gold that I found.
It beggers any man that keepes it: it is turnd out of all
Townes and Cities for a dangerous thing, and euery
Man that meanes to liue well, endeuours to trust
To himselfe, and to liue without it.

1 Zounds, it is euen now at my elbow perswading me
Not to kill the Duke.

2 Take the deuill in thy minde, and beleeue him not,
He would insinuate with thee to make thee sigh.

1 Tut, I am strong in fraud, he cannot peuaile with me,
I warrant thee.

2 Soode like a tall fellow that respects his reputation,
Come shall we to this geare?

1 Take him ouer the costard with the hilts of my sword,
And then we wil chop him in the Malmsey-but in the next (roome

2 Oh, excellent deuice, make a soppe of him.

1 Harke, he stirs, shall I strike?

2 No, first lets reason with him. *Cla. awaketh.*

Cla. Where art thou Keeper, giue me a cup of wine.

1 You shall haue wine enough, my Lo. anon.

Cla. In Gods name, what art thou?

2 A man, as you are.

Cla. But not as I am, royall.

2 Nor you as we are, loyall.

Cla. Thy voyce is thunder, but thy lookes are humble.

2 My voyce is now the kings, my lookes mine owne.

Cla. How darkely and how deadly doost thou spake?
Tell me who are you? wherefore come you hither?

Am. To, to, to.

Cla. To murther me? *Am. I.*

Cla. You scarsely haue the hearts to tell me so,
And therefore cannot haue the hearts to do it.
Wherein my friends haue I offended you?

1 Offend

1 Offended vs you haue not, but the King.

Cla. I shall be reconcild to him againe.

2 Neuer my Lo. therefore prepaire to die.

Cla. Are you cald forth from out a world of men
To slay the innocent? what is my offence?
Where are the euidence to accuse me?
What lawfull quest haue giuen their verdict vp
Vnto the frowning iudge, or who pronounc'd
The bitter sentence of poore Clarence death,
Before I be conuict by course of law?
To threaten me with death is most vnlawfull:
I carge you as you hope to haue redemption,
By Christs deare blood shed for our greeuous sins
That you depart and lay no hands on me,
The deede you vndertake is damnable.

1 What we will do, we do vpon command.

2 And he that hath commanded is the king.

Cla. Erronious vassaile, the great King of Kings,
Hath in his Tables of his Law commanded,
That thou shalt doe no murther, and wilt thou then
Spurne at his edict, and fulfill a mans?
Take heede, for he holdes vengeance in his hands,
To hurle vpon their heads that breake his Law.

2 And that same vengeance doth he throw on thee,
For false forswearing and for murder too?
Thou didst receiue the holy Sacrament
To fight in quarrell of the house of Lancaster,

1 And like a traitor to the name of God,
Didst breake that vow and with thy trecherous blade,
Vnripst the bowels of thy soueraignes sonne.

2 Whom thou wert sworne to cherish and defend.

1 How canst thou vrge Gods dreadfull law to vs,
When thou hast broke it in so deare degree?

Cla. Alas, for whose sake did I that ill deed?
For Edward, for my brother, for his sake:
Why sirs, he sends ye not to murder me for this,
For in this sinne he is as deepe as I.
If God will be reuenged for this deede,
Take not the quarrell from his powerfull arme,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* (STC 22317) LONDON, 1605 THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.34.k.49) Octavo